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communities in ACTION

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ONE MILLION NEW JOBS!

social theorist Frank Reissman

says it can be done and tells how

Dr. Frank Reissman, 42, professor of educational sociology at New York University, is an innovative and prolific writer on the social problems of the disadvantaged. He has been author or co-author of "The Culturally Deprived Child," "Mental Health of the Poor," and, now at press, "Social Class and Social Policy."

His most recent book, "New Careers for the Poor," published in 1965 by Free Press of New York, provided the basis for a recent meeting at OEO headquarters with Reissman and the OEO advisory board of people from the poverty communities—the Community Representatives Advisory Council (CRAC).

What follows are excerpts from remarks made by Dr. Reissman at the June CRAC meeting. He called for creation of one million new jobs for "sub-professionals" and stressed that such new jobs must not be "dead end" or "public works" jobs that lead nowhere.

Reissman completed his doctorate in social psychology at Columbia University in 1955. He then joined the psychology staff at Bard College where he became chairman of the department in 1958. In 1964 he was named associate professor in the psychiatry department of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, remaining there until 1966 when he joined the New York University staff.

In 1961 and 1962 he was a visiting professor at Columbia University where he worked in the psychiatry department under a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health.

(Dr. Reissman's statements do not constitute OEO policy but are published to stimulate thought on approaches to effective community action in the War on Poverty.)

On Untrained Grass Roots Poverty Aides

"I have come to believe that "non-professionals" or whatever you want to call them—"sub-professionals," "technicians' aides"—without training are almost useless. I think the key to all the good things I try to write about non-professionals is that they should be trained. When they're trained, they're tremendous. They are far better than anything we wrote in "New Careers for the Poor" or anything I anticipated or predicted at any time. At least they can be.

"I don't mean every trained non-professional is that good but lots of them in lots of parts of the country are doing tremendous things, learning very rapidly. They want to learn very rapidly, developing new ideas—new approaches—becoming highly skilled in working with people in the community and with the agencies and with the professionals.

"Those without training are filled with confusion. They've been glamorized and made to believe that they're "hot-shots," and that they have some instinctive or natural knowledge that everybody has to bow down to and be blessed by and they're wrong. They have a lot of this knowledge but it has to be put together with other kinds of knowledge, with professional knowledge, at least in my opinion. . . . I'm overstating this as you realize.

"I don't believe it quite as hard as I'm saying it but the thing I'm really calling for is a tremendous new emphasis on training which we have not been getting. . . .

On Educational "Baloney"

"We're learning that people learn very well when they are given the job first with the training built into the job. In my opinion (there is) a bunch of baloney (in) America (to the effect) that you have to have a lot of training . . . and then you get a job at the end of college or graduate school, and then you're going to go on and do some things. In other words, the whole baloney is that you have to get an education first and then you have to get a job.

On Jobs For 'Poor Now' Adults

"This is only one way and it shouldn't be imposed on large numbers of people, particularly 'poor-now' adults. . . . What I'm saying is give the adults jobs first and build in the training and the development and the careers on the job. . . .

"This isn't public works. The future of America is not in public works and construction jobs. The future of America is in service jobs, human service jobs, working with people. The economists predict that 40 years from now 50 percent of the American people will be working in human service, that is working as teacher aides, as teacher assistants, recreation assistants, research assistants, social workers.

On The Neighborhood Center Concept

"One of the big problems of our society is that we have so many of what are called fragmented services, services that are broken up all over —welfare here, housing there, health there, etc.

"All these things are disconnected and not tied together. The neighborhood service center represents a very important place to tie them together. It also represents a marvelous local place for participation. Here people can come, talk, have forums and debates. . . .

One Million New Jobs

"Another thing I think we've been learning, and this is more expensive but I want to say it very strongly, is that this kind of technical, non-professional job with the chance of moving through learning, through getting college education, is the kind of job which is very appealing to large numbers of people in the society—poor and rich, middle-class and so forth.

"And the chances of getting these jobs on a large scale should be thought about on the part of the government. What I would like to propose is that we think about a million, one million, of such jobs. Now that would cost a little more money. That would cost five billion dollars. (Incidentally, compared to the money we spend in Viet Nam—which is double that—the money we spend on war in general—which is ten to twelve times that—it becomes very small.) But imagine what a million new jobs, meaningful decent jobs, would mean in America. . . .

"This brings me to a basic issue that has been bothering me a great deal.

"You, I am sure, are very close to the groups in the community who I call the warriors against the warriors against poverty. These are the people that say the poor aren't getting enough and social workers are being paid too well. . . . They say all the critical things but they really don't have any constructive proposals most of the time. They don't have any program . . .—those people who call themselves the representatives of the 'nitty gritty.' You know that whole business. They're the 'insiders to the poor.' They have the 'inside voice to the poor.'

"I've gone around the country seeing these people, and I'm frequently told they have great groups behind them and when I investigate, they frequently have three people behind them. But some of them, have some people behind them. I don't mean to deprecate them.

"But I do mean to deprecate their lack of a constructive approach to what we could get, what the possibilities are in the society. These people could be building a demand for one million jobs, meaningful jobs. Instead of simply griping and complaining and distracting and diverting, they could call for constructive programs.

"I want to provide the jobs with training built in. . . . I think it would change the professionals just as the non-professionals coming into the system are changing the professionals, making them much more responsive to the neighborhoods. I think it would produce a much better coordinated system of services so they weren't all separated. . . .

"So I think that is a key kind of demand. But whether you like that one or not, I'm suggesting that maybe you should ask the warriors against the warriors against the war on poverty to come up with programs. . . . and not just for programs in your neighborhood.

"Now you might not think that you should call for a million jobs. You might want to call for the guaranteed annual income, which a lot of people have been talking about. You might want to call for a highly improved minimum wage because 18 million people in America are not covered properly by the minimum wage legislation. So you might want to get that changed very significantly. You might want to call for a new program in the arts. There are a great many different kinds of programs you might want to call for. I'm not suggesting that you call for mine.

"I happen to think the key at the moment in America—I personally think—that a million jobs for the poor would be a key for changing the system drastically. I think it would be the key to integration, the key to the whole education question.

On National Unity In Programming

"Programs to be really meaningful in America have to be bigger than just your neighborhood. I know we are all very close to our neighborhood. We love it and all that and it's very important, but local neighborhood programs are only significant if they're connected to the national picture so that your neighborhood is doing this and this neighborhood is donig this and the third neighborhood is doing this and in all these neighborhoods there are new neighborhood service centers, there are new jobs, new careers and so forth. It becomes united in this kind of way. . . .

"I feel very strongly about—the need to get together these new non-professional technicians. Now you're getting together. That's very good but I would like to see a national conference of all the non-professionals, of all the community workers and all the community representatives, or at least representatives of them. There are indications there may be as many as 75,000 people shortly who will be involved in this kind of work.

On Creating New Careers

"We've learned in Richmond, California that you can (develop jobs) for community law enforcement aides. Another phrase for it would be 'police community aides.'

"These are residents of a neighborhood employed to work in conjunction with the police departments. They are paid workers. (Their goal) is to provide a better relationship between police and community.

"We needn't analyze the whole problem of police training or police structure—but there are a number of things that make it difficult for police to do things appropriately.

"But people from the community could be hired and trained to work in conjunction with them to work with people in the community. I think this is an extremely important element that might affect the police department and might effect much better relations.

"There are a lot of other kinds of jobs we talked about in the book: teachers' aides (people working with teachers and schools), playground and recreation aides. There are research aides.

On Where The Money's Coming From

"The kinds of jobs we're talking about in police departments, in welfare departments, in housing departments, hospitals, health services—

these kinds of jobs could be produced through anti-poverty monies and through monies available now through educational systems, the Education Act, through Medicare, the Medicare Act and so forth.

"Millions of such jobs could be produced. The need is tremendous. The Automation Commission estimates we could use five million such people.

"But we have to produce the demand for them because we have to have the agencies get the funding to pay for them. In many cases this funding has been developed. In Medicare it exists, it exists through OEO, through Head Start. . . .

"There are a couple of problems I want to have you keep in mind. What I said before—the need to get training for these jobs—and secondly, the importance that (these new) jobs not be dead-end jobs.

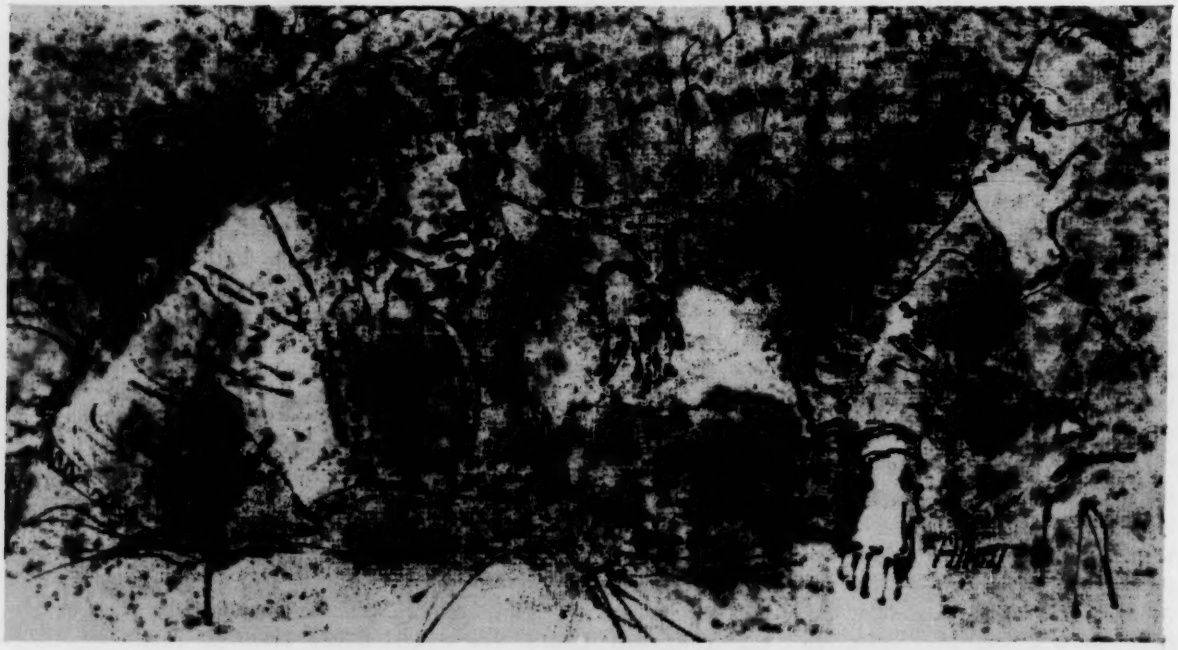
On Artists, Poverty Unions and Debate

"I think there is a big need for the development of the arts in neighborhoods that we work in, for artistic programs of all kinds. . . . One of the ideas . . . that I think is very good is to get subsidies to be given to some artists to open up little lofts in the neighborhoods where they might live and—as far as their responsibilities for those subsidies—work with youngsters and other people in the neighborhood who want to develop artistic expression. . . .

"Secondly, in your community programs I want to suggest the idea of using surveys. We can train aides to do surveys as part of a research aide or community aide kind of function. And these surveys could be done on lots of questions that it would be very important to get information on. For example, I think it would be very useful to housing authorities to have surveys made of complaints in the public housing projects—things that people who live there don't like, would like to see changed. Surveys made of consumer practices in the neighborhood, prices that are charged etc. I think we should hire people—residents, poor people—to do these kinds of surveys. . . .

"I'd like to suggest that you think about a union, a trade union. . . . I think it would be of great value to get some trade unions organizing this growing number of non-professionals and people like yourselves, people functioning in community CAP programs around the country.

"Finally I like the developing debates that are going on. I like to see local debates in the community, see people brought into debate. . . . I think it's a very positive climate in the country today to discuss these differences. In your local communities I would like to recommend to you that you bring in people, have them argue about what kind of program we should have for the poor, what kind of thing should we do, what's wrong with what we're doing, what should we be doing, what are the different approaches to the problem."



CONSUMER EDUCATION IN BROOKLYN

The story of a successful OEO-funded consumer education program in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn is the story of Mrs. Gladys Aponte, B.A., M.A., LLb. and former encyclopedia saleswoman.

In 1962, Mrs. Aponte and her husband ("He's a wonderful man. A waiter. We complement each other very well. He wants me to get my doctorate.") arrived in the United States from Puerto Rico.

Mrs. Aponte holds three degrees from the University of Puerto Rico: a bachelor of arts in politics and sociology, a master of arts in public administration and a bachelor of laws. However, it didn't take long to find that, whatever the reasons, there were no job openings that would fit her qualifications.

So she took a job for six months as a door-to-door encyclopedia saleswoman while she waited out a New York City civil service appointment. She was an unusual saleswoman. "I told those mothers not to buy the books if they couldn't buy milk," she says in her naturally emphatic manner. "This wasn't an attitude that was popular with the sales manager."

Her city job finally came through: she was hired as a human rights specialist for the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Soon, she was selected by the Commission to develop a consumer education program, which largely revolved around her aggressive teaching talents. "I graduated the first consumer education class in this city."

Her consumer education program was noted by Youth in Action, Inc., the OEO-funded community action agency that serves Bedford-Stuyvesant. The population is about 300,000, almost entirely Negroes and Puerto Ricans.

Youth in Action, which had set aside $52,000 for an areawide consumer action-education program, asked Mrs. Aponte to begin the program last October. She accepted, and was presented with the key to a refuse-filled storefront.

At her request, a local priest sent two women to help her clean up the store for use as a classroom. These two women became her first students; they were quickly followed by 18 more. Most of the students were on welfare; they were either Negro or Puerto Rican.

"kicking the one dollar down habit"

"One woman who lived across the street from our classroom heard that we were enrolling students. She came to me, saying that her husband had abandoned her and their six children and that she was on welfare. 'Mrs. Aponte,' she said, 'if only I could get something with you. It is hard

for me to get a job because I can't go far from my children.'

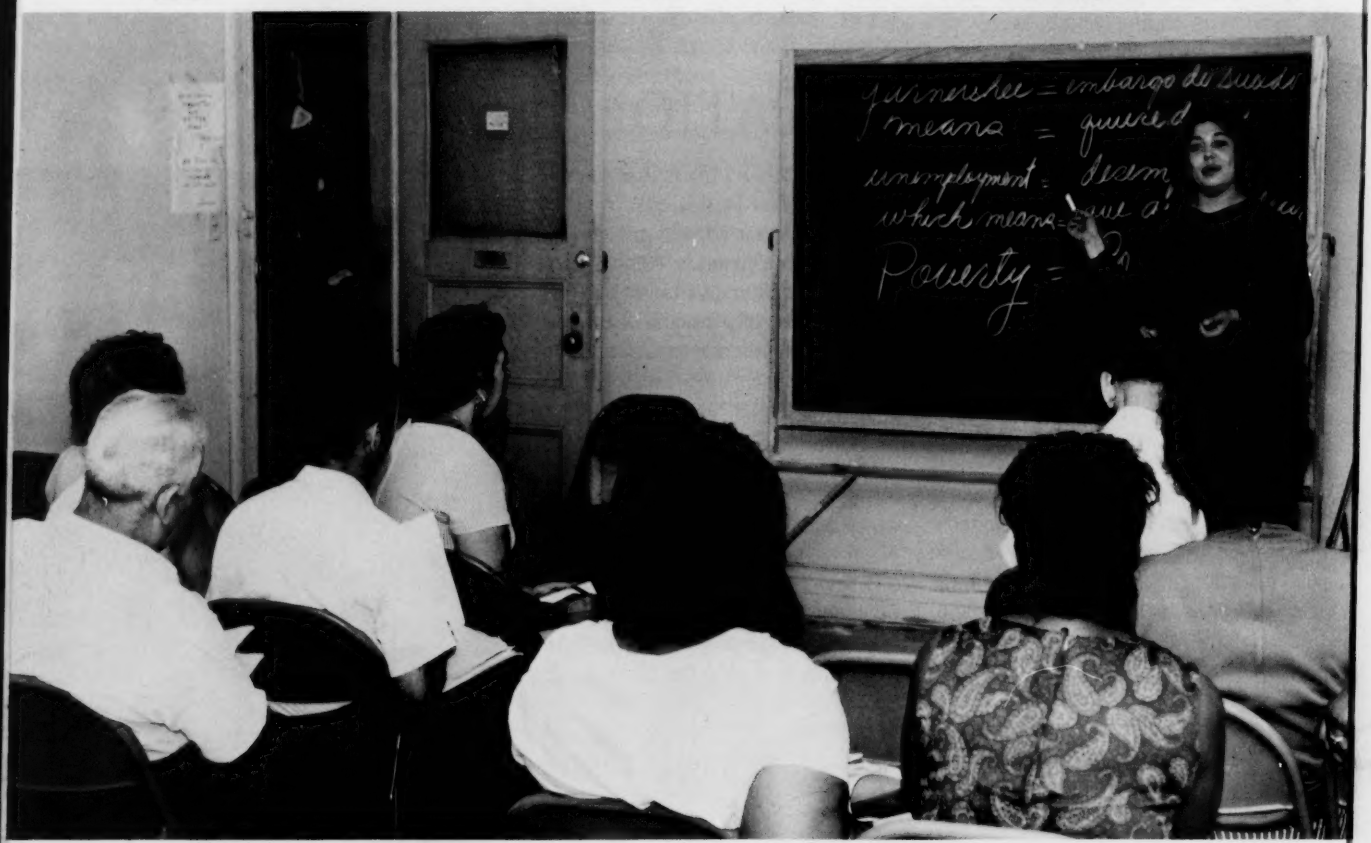
"I enrolled this woman because she was skilled in typing and steno. She gave us good service. After a while, she found a good job for herself."

said: 'Mrs. Aponte, that's not fair, he can't understand you.'

"That's what I wanted to hear. From that day on, we held class in English and Spanish—and everyone understood why."

Her students were being trained

where they would get better food at lower prices. Some of them also talked about what the sociologists call "compensatory consumption," that is, the urge to buy something that, hopefully, would always provide some happiness in their drab



Mrs. Gladys Aponte teaching her consumer aide students in English and Spanish.

When the classes began, Mrs. Aponte was faced with a language problem. On one hand, her Spanish-speaking students did not understand English. On the other hand, she recognized that there is "some continental resentment" against people who do not speak English.

"I decided that the best thing to do was to announce that only English would be spoken in the classes."

"After a few days, a Negro girl came to me when I was questioning a Puerto Rican man in English, and

to become consumer aides—that is, carriers of the consumer action and education gospel. However, many of the students did not realize they were living in poverty.

To solve this problem, Mrs. Aponte first held informal sessions in which the students were encouraged to talk about their problems. They talked of being fired when their wages were garnisheed without warning, of making endless installment payments for the necessities of life, of not having the carfare to shop

lives, like a shiny car or a color television set.

"When they talked about what they had said individually," reports Mrs. Aponte, "they began to realize what it meant to live in poverty. They began to take another look at themselves—at their neighborhood."

Next, Mrs. Aponte led her students on comparison shopping tours. Among other things, they discovered that some merchants raised prices on the 1st and 16th of each month—the dates on which the welfare checks

arrived. They also discovered that much merchandise—though lower in grade—was priced higher than in nearby nonslum areas.

At this point, one of the students said: "I have been living in this neighborhood for 25 years, but I never saw what I see now, I was distracted by my own problems. I must have been sleepwalking." As Mrs. Aponte points out: "Poverty is a state of mind as well as an economic condition!"

Working in pairs from door to door, the students encouraged the local residents to talk about their problems the same way Mrs. Aponte got them to talk in her classroom. Most people, after talking about their problems for a while would realize, for the first time, that there was some connection between the fact that they paid high rates of interest on installment plans, paid high prices for low-grade goods, and sometimes, paid with their jobs when their wages were garnisheed without warning.

The report of one student reads: "Mrs. C. is up against the same problem we have in our program. And she wants to know more about the prices that change on the 1st and 16th of the month. And she agrees with everything Mrs. V. was discussing with her concerning the high-price tactics."

Another report reads: "Mrs. B. seems to be a very conscientious housewife and she told me that the meat and meat products are sometimes already spoiled but she has no choice but either buy them or go without. With six children to cook for that is not easy. She wishes somebody would do something to correct this situation."

At the end of six months of training—seven hours a day—Mrs. Aponte graduated 20 consumer aides. They are now helping her to train an additional 53 aides, who will graduate in October.

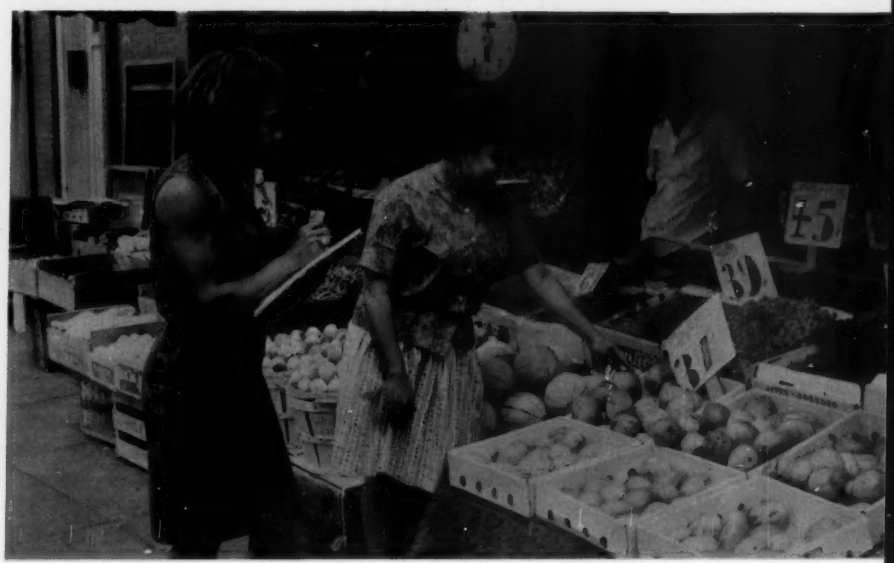
The 20 graduates have organized 20 block buyers committees, which will, in the future, organize themselves into buyers clubs so that they may buy necessities wholesale. If Mrs. Aponte has her way, every block in Bedford-Stuyvesant will have a consumers committee and a buyers club.

The consumer aides have encouraged the formation of a 15-family pilot buyers club among tenants in a public housing apartment building. Frequently, representatives of these tenants buy vegetables at 3 a.m. from a wholesale market. Club members have also worked out a schedule under which they buy and carry food to elderly people living in the building. At present, they are looking for space in the building in which to store nonperishables.

raised on the 1st and 16th of the month have a way of going down once they enter a store. The next step will come when, the neighborhood, organized by Mrs. Aponte, will sit down "in a conciliatory way" with the merchants and try to resolve the problems of the consumer.

At present, Mrs. Aponte operates one consumer action center, which contains offices and a classroom. Another center, now being prepared for operation, will open its doors soon. A center is planned for each of Bedford-Stuyvesant's five poverty target areas.

The consumer aides have started their own grocery cooperative, headed by a man who started out as a consumer aide student. While he was attending Mrs. Aponte's classes, a woman in the neighborhood who had decided to close down



Two student consumer aides out on a comparison shopping tour.

There are other indications of impact on the neighborhood. The city welfare department often asks the aides to accompany welfare recipients out buying furniture. Furthermore, the aides report that prices her store offered to sell him her grocery stock on an installment-plan basis.

He agreed to buy and moved the stock to a store near Bedford-Stuyvesant—the original store building

Attorney Elias Martinez counsels Bedford-Stuyvesant residents on how to budget and pay their bills. At rear desk is Isaac Perez, economic analyst.

was not large enough to house his family. Profits from this grocery cooperative are shared by the aids.

Presently, a private neighborhood organization called "Friends of Consumer Education" is trying to raise funds to move the cooperative store back into the Bedford-Stuyvesant area so that it can be incorporated as a general-purpose cooperative.

During the past few months, Mrs. Aponte has added to her staff Isaac Perez, an economist and Elias Martinez, an attorney.

Mr. Perez keeps the organization's books and analyzes its progress statistically. Mr. Martinez specializes in financial counseling and in helping people who have had their salaries garnisheed, especially those who have been fired because of it. He has been successful in overturning three default cases on the ground that the person held in default had never been served with a subpoena.

Many times, charges Mrs. Aponte, process servers will not enter a tough slum area or a dark building frequented by a street gang. Nevertheless, she says, they will certify that they have delivered their subpoena. The first thing the person held in default hears about it is when his boss tells him he is fired because his wages have been garnisheed.

For instance, take the case of Mrs. M., who rents one of her five rooms to another woman to increase her meager income. One day, a delivery man with a meat freezer appears at her door. He says that the woman who rents the room has ordered the freezer; however, he continues, since she is not at home, he wonders if she will sign for the freezer so that he will not have to take it back to the warehouse and try to deliver it another time.

Mrs. M. signs. She hears no more about the freezer until she is suddenly fired, when, to her surprise, her salary is garnisheed to pay for the freezer. It seems that, believing she signed only for delivery, she also signed an installment contract. A court held her in default, but she never received a subpoena.

Mrs. Aponte instructed Mr. Martinez to challenge the court's default judgment on the ground that Mrs. M. had not had a chance to appear to defend herself. The court proceeded to throw out the default judgment because the subpoena had not been served. And, with Mrs. Aponte's help, the woman got her job back.

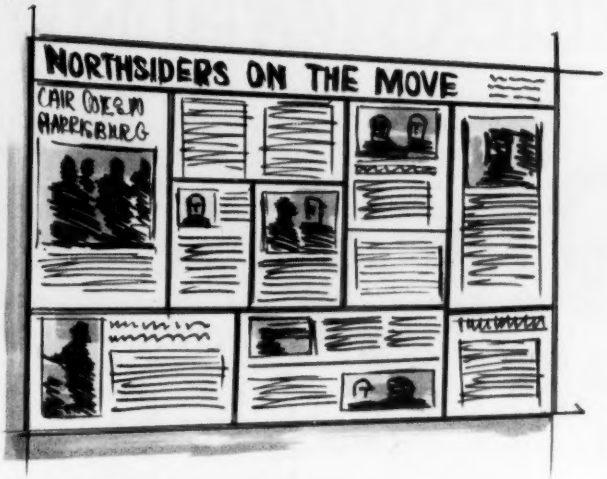
The consumer legal offensive in Bedford-Stuyvesant will increase its momentum soon as attorneys provided under a recently announced Legal Services grant begin to assist area residents.

Despite all possible consumer action and education, Mrs. Aponte says, there will still be a need for remedial legislation. For instance, she says, there should be some protection for the buyer who is held in default without ever having a chance to appear in court. There should also be, she says, unemployment insurance for the fired worker who is held in default without a chance to defend himself.

The poor have a right to the same access enjoyed by the middle class to credit unions and buyers cooperatives, Mrs. Aponte stresses.

"The poor also deserve a chance to get full value from their consumer dollar. As things stand now, they live in a permanent state of inflation! Oh, I tell you, what we could do with a credit union!"

—JOHN CORR



Communications in Pittsburgh: POSTER NEWSPAPERS

This campaign is funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity.

The poster newspaper uses slang and large type to put across 12 stories on anti-poverty programs or services available to Northsiders. The copy reads quickly and is crammed with basic facts, addresses and phone numbers on CAP programs so that a passerby pausing to read can rapidly determine what facilities are immediately available to help with specific problems related to poverty or lack of opportunity.

"Northsiders On The Move" is the newspaper's title. Breezy headlines such as "Cool That Constable" and "Where The Action Is" are combined with large clear photographs.

"Cool That Constable" is an article that informs people of their rights as tenants.

The text reads:

"Know your rights. If the constable comes to seal your goods for nonpayment of rent, you're entitled to first choice of $300 worth of your furnishings—$600 for husband and wife. And in addition, you get to keep your clothes, books, records and certain other personal items.

"Don't sign a lease before seeing a lawyer. Most leases strip the tenant of the $300 exemption. Get written receipts for every pay-off to constable or landlord.

"For legal help with any other problems—adoptions, child support, debtor-creditor, husband threatening to "Take The Bridge"—phone Attorney Robert Stafanko, Neighborhood Legal Services Association, 212 East Ohio Street, 321-3030, for an appointment."

This *Northsider* story ends with the information that "You're eligible for free counsel if your income and family situation make it hard for you to afford a lawyer. A family of four with income of $4500 would qualify. You might too . . ."

Other subjects covered in the *Northsider* first issue include the home repair project, Head Start classes, Community Block Club activities and Family Service help.

The newspaper is published by the North Side Committee on Human Resources and Neighborhood Centers Association.

Mrs. Dorothea Pollard, member of the Board of Directors from the Mayor's Committee on Human Resources, Inc., for the North Side said: "We are very excited about this experimental paper which we hope will reach all the thousands of residents of the North Side."

In the first hour after one of these posters was put up on Charles Street community action workers counted some 100 passers-by who stopped to look it over.

A second issue is planned this month.

Community action planners on Pittsburgh's North Side have designed a giant poster newspaper they hope will be an effective device for communicating quickly with a great many people.

Some 5,000 of the 3-by-4 foot newspapers have been hung on fences, plastered on walls and displayed in store fronts throughout the area.

THE AMERICANIZATION OF

"Man, help me
be square. I
can't make
it like this.
I don't like a
lot of things
they do, but
I got no
choice I want out
of the slums. I
want out of
handouts. Man
help me
be a
man."

WILLIS WARDELL

These were the first words I heard from Willis Wardell, a Negro, seventeen years of age from Baltimore, Maryland. Willis was one of the first thirty young men to enter the Job Corps. He came to the first Job Corps center in Catoctin, Maryland, on January 15, 1965.

It was a cold but clear day when that bus arrived from Washington. Members of the staff, not unlike anxious first fathers, were standing around waiting. The big questions were: "What would they be like? How do we make them feel that we can help them make it?"

They were an odd group of adolescents. Not like those described in the mass media. They were not laughing. They were not exploring. They were not dressed in the styles of the "mods" or the "ivy leaguers" or the "hoods." They were Negro youth from Baltimore and Caucasians from the hollers of West Virginia. They seemed to have several things in common: They were poor and they were suspicious.

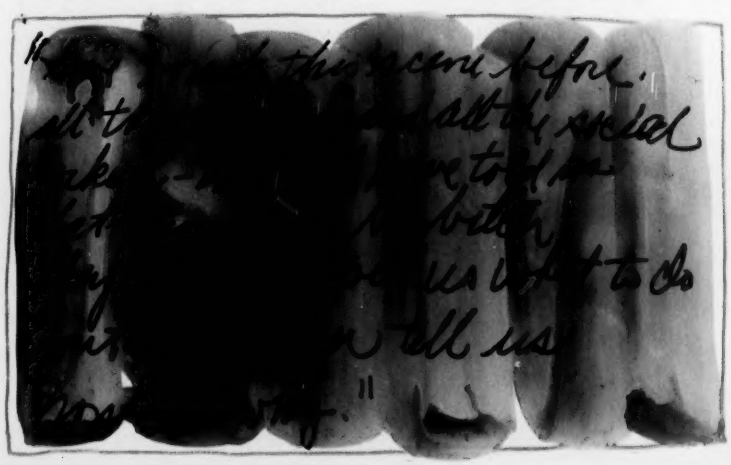
Wardell, after having a cup of coffee and a cigarette, described in no uncertain terms how the group felt:

Wardell and the others were shown around the center. They were introduced to different members of the staff. They were informed as to where and when they would eat. The director of education showed them the educational materials which were to be used. He made every effort to explain that this would not be like school. They could move at their own pace and they would be given every opportunity for individual attention.

They were told about the work projects, the kinds of equipment they would be using and the kinds of jobs they would be undertaking. Each staff member concluded his presentation with a request for questions from the boys.

There were no takers—they just sat. Finally, one young man, a thin boy with rotten teeth, asked when he could get a leave so he could visit his father in Washington. He was told that after a few weeks in the center there would be be opportunities for one-day passes. Before the whole business of days off could be explained, he mumbled out loud:

"He don't want to see me anyway. When I was a kid he took off. I saw him once when I was ten, and he said I should get out. He don't care anyway."



At dinner that night the cook really went out of his way. He had put together a special meal. There was roast beef, french fries, beets and apple pie. The boys knew all about french fries and apple pie. Few of them, however, knew what the other things were. At one table where the beef was rare and red, the following took place: A seventeen-year-old from Hazard County, Kentucky pushed aside the platter filled with beef. "I ain't going to eat no blood meat," he stated. Two others from the same county reacted in the same manner. The fourth man at the table said, "That's all right, man. I will take care of it all." He was from the big city, and he had somewhere learned the difference between rare and well-done cooking. The beets presented a similar conflict for some of the new Corpsmen. What was it, and how do you eat it?

Later that evening they went to their beds. Here, too, there were anxious moments and doubts. Several of the young men asked if they really got to sleep in their own bed. More than one asked why there was a need for two sheets. None of the boys had brought toothbrushes or paste. Few had ever used these items on a regular basis. The notion of a shower before bedtime was also a fairly new concept, as was having your own private towel and washcloth.

The first night was rough for both the new Corpsmen and the staff. This was the first time away from home for many of the boys. The

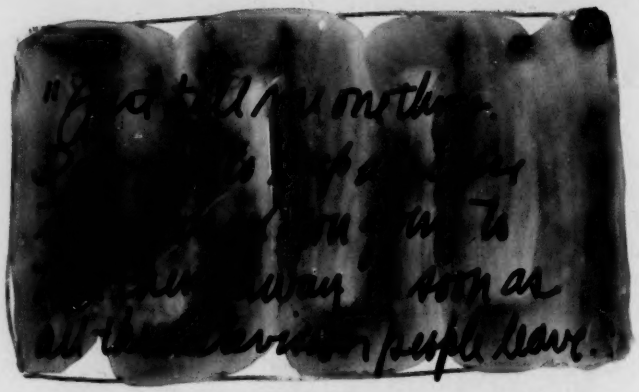
young man whose father had thrown him out began to cry and then to shout: "I am sick, I am sick, don't no one care? Please, please, give me some help."

A former school principal from Montana, who was now a Job Corps center director of education, ran into the boy's room. The boy stared at him and continued to sob. Mike, the staff member, put his arm around the boy and said something about everything being okay and just to take it easy. The boy fell asleep in his arms.

At three o'clock in the morning another member of the staff awoke me. One of the boys was not in his bed. Hurriedly we put together a search team. This is all we needed—the first night of Job Corps and already a drop-out. We searched the grounds and all of the buildings. Finally, we found our man. He was sitting in the room where I had conducted taped interviews with the boys. He had been listening to himself on the tape recorder. He was pretending he was a radio announcer—the play back of his tape went like this:

"This is Gerry E . . . . . , talking to all you mothers from the Job Corps center in Maryland. We all got here and there is a lot of snow. But don't worry, nobody has been lost yet. The food is pretty good and the people seem okay. Before I tune off, I just want to leave you with these words, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I . . .'."

The next day I met with Willis Wardell. Each question I asked was followed by a polite response of either, "Yes sir" or "No sir." Finally, after a fruitless effort to get him to talk, I asked what were his first impressions of the Job Corps. He said:



Willis was referring to the work clothes, the linens, the toiletries and the stationery given to each new Corpsman. I told him they were his for as long as he stayed in the center. Willis was perplexed. It was obvious that he really did not believe me.

I replied that the Job Corps was a program for guys like himself. It was a program to help young people who somehow and for some reason had not made it before. It was a program for giving guys and girls another chance. I added, recalling what he had said earlier, that every effort would be made to show him how and why he should make it.

It is now almost two years since Willis entered the Job Corps. During this period of time Willis has had a lot of trouble. He has been in several fights. One day he went to a dance in town. A couple of town boys stopped him and called him "nigger." Willis hit one of the boys in the mouth. He was arrested, spent the night in jail and returned to his center.

On another occasion he got into a fight with a fellow Corpsman over who had the right to a locker. Willis was placed on probation and told he would be confined to the center with no passes for four weeks. He told the center director to "shove it." He picked up his few belongings and walked out.

Two days later Willis returned to the center. He had been hitching rides and just bumming around. He was hungry and he was tired. He made the expected apologies to the center director. (Willis may not have done well in school, but like so many

others who have grown up in the inner-city jungle, he had learned certain techniques of survival.)

He asked for another chance, adding that he had, of course, learned his lesson. The center director agreed and added four more weeks of center restriction plus a full week of kitchen duty. Willis did not like it, but as he related later, "The center was for the birds but it beat hell out of what I had at home."

Willis is going through something that sociologists call the "socialization process." In simple terms, this means that Willis is learning what it takes to make it in a complex society. Like some other 30,000 young people who have entered Job Corps, Willis is discovering that to enter the "good life" you have to have certain skills, abilities and behaviors.

In many ways the Job Corps is running a new kind of Americanization program. Except for the population, the idea is not too different from the programs which existed in this country in the early 1900's when so many outsiders came to this country.

The young people who come to the Job Corps are outsiders. That may seem strange to many people since these youth are really not "foreigners." After all, they were born in this country. In fact, many of them are descendents of people who were here long before the early 1900's or 1800's. They are, however, on the outside of most everything that all of us take for granted when we think of youth. They are not part of vacations, picnics, trips to the ball park with dad or the Disneyland scene.

They are not the "in group" with respect to high school proms, cars, bowling parties or college. They are neither the "rah-rahs", the "beats", the "mods" nor the "scholars" you find in most high schools and colleges.

They are the "nons." The non-employed, the non-readers, the non-verbal, the non-communicative, the non-acceptable. No one really wants them: Not the nice schools, not the nice clubs, not the nice community centers, not the nice youth organizations and certainly not the nice people who live in nice neighborhoods.

Although there are always problems in attempting to categorize people, we can say some general things about these youths. Of those who have entered the Job Corps, some 38% have been non-readers. This means that more than one-third of all youth who enter this program cannot read a simple sentence. (Keep in mind that many of them have spent nine to twelve years in our schools.)

Over 45% are non-domesticated. In other words, almost half of these youth come from homes where there is no father or mother available. Forty per cent, according to others, have exhibited non-acceptable behavior prior to entering Job Corps. This ranges from a large group who have been truants from school, a smaller number who have been found drinking or in possession of someone else's car, to a very small number who have been booked for more serious offenses.

(All in all, however, when comparisons are made in the pre-Job Corps behavior records of these youth with non-Job Corps of a similar age, no significant differences are found. It should also be kept in mind that poor youth who commit delinquent acts are more likely to be found out and booked than are the more affluent adolescents.)

Seventy per cent were non-educatable. According to school officials, 70% of the youth entering Job Corps were found unacceptable because of behavior or cognitive shortcomings. Most Job Corps youth did not choose to leave school. They are more likely to be thrown out rather than dropouts.

Fifty-five per cent came from homes where the primary wage earner was not employed. Fifty-six per cent come from non-acceptable residential dwellings. Over 50% of the males attempted to enter the military service and were found unacceptable. Similar statistics could be presented to show that these youth come to Job Corps undernourished, and in need of psychological, medical and dental attention.

The one characteristic which they do share with all other youth, however, is a desire for a better way of life. Not unlike middle class youth, the poor do want in. We in Job Corps have yet to meet a youngster who has expressed a desire to remain in poverty.

I, for one, have not heard a single youngster say, "Man, I dig the slums. I love the filth. I really enjoy having an old man who drinks or a mother who has to scrub floors for a living."

On the contrary, as these youth express their hopes, one gets all of the dressing which comes from the American Dream. They want a nice home, in a nice suburb, with a nice

job and family. They want nice clothes, a nice car, nice money and all that goes with the good life. More important, many of these young men and women are quite prepared to make real sacrifices to attain this good life.

Many of them are willing to take on the psychological and physical attacks of those who reject them because of their color, their ethnic background or their poverty. Many are willing to take jobs in strange and foreign communities. Many are willing to leave behind close family ties and familiar places in order to get the training needed for productive and responsible adult citizenship.

Many of them are willing to lay aside prejudices and stereotypes in order to live and work with others who are equally in need of this program. I believe that most of us would be hard pressed to find more than a handful of middle class youth who would be willing to take on such a challenge.

Some, of course, will not be able to take the pressures of such a program. There will be those who, for a variety of reasons whether they complete their training or not, will return to the life they knew before they came to Job Corps.

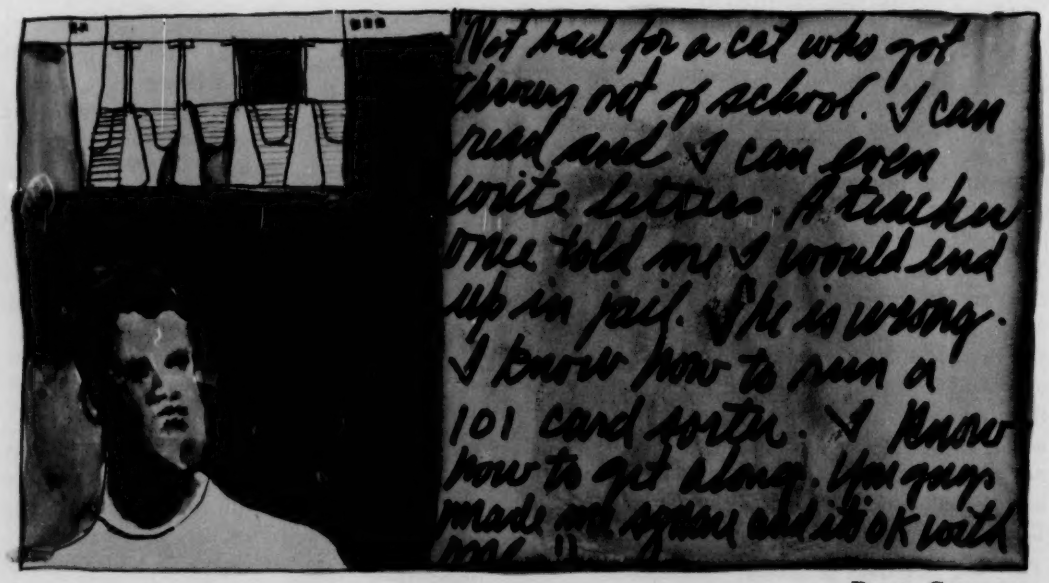
Still others will be asked to leave Job Corps centers because we are unable to provide the psychiatric and medical help they need. And a smaller number will be forced out because they exhibit behavior which cannot be handled in such a residential setting.

The vast majority, however, some 72%, will successfully complete their Job Corps training and hopefully fulfill their aspirations. Yet, even those who drop out or are asked to leave will have gained something of value. Perhaps it will be nothing more than eye glasses, or the filling of cavities, or a few dollars which might provide one more chance. If none of these, than each youngster who enters Job Corps will know at least that for some reason his country felt that he did, in fact, have the stuff to make it.

As for Willis Wardell. He is now in the Rodman Job Corps Center in New Bedford, Massachusetts. This is an urban center which gives special training in data processing and the repair of office machinery. Willis was able to transfer to this center because he is now able to read and do simple math problems.

When he first came to Job Corps, Willis was a "picture reader." He could not handle words so he just looked at pictures. According to his counselor, Wilis is a good student. In fact, he was recently appointed to the center leadership council.

Willis will be graduating from Rodman in August of this year. The chances are good that he will get a white collar job with a large industrial firm. As Willis puts it:


Not bad for a cat who got
thrown out of school. I can
read and I can even
write letters. A teacher
once told me I would end
up in jail. She is wrong.
I know how to run a
101 card sorter. I know
how to get along. You guys
made me appear old it's OK with
me.

—David Gottlieb

valley in transit

—*Oregon moves to help its migrant farm workers*

The Willamette River in Western Oregon is flanked by one of the most fertile valleys in the world, profuse with such crops as potatoes, strawberries, boysenberries, beans and hops—an area offering an unusually long work season for migratory and seasonal farm workers.

Thousands of them migrate to Oregon each spring from Oklahoma, Texas, further down the Pacific coast, or wherever they found work the previous fall. It is an annual cycle, followed by successive generations of migrant families, a cycle replete with hunger, disease and illiteracy. The only "luxury" possession for many migrants is an automobile which serves as transportation from one point in the survival process to the next.

The problems of the migrant are not known to most Oregonians but some, led by Will Pape, have begun to fight to break down the barriers that keep these people from moving up the income ladder. Pape is executive director of the Valley Migrant League, a private, non-profit corporation serving seven counties in Oregon.

VML main offices are in Woodburn, a quiet town between Portland and Salem on Interstate Highway #5. The Rev. Kent D. Lawrence, one of the founders of the VML and chairman of its board of directors, sums up the program as "an operation that is obviously going somewhere and accomplishing something. We have not been in it too long and are not unwanted anywhere yet.

"We are setting ourselves up so that we can try to determine when it is time for us to get out of a particular program in a particular area because the area can take it over. We hope we have the wisdom to know when to leave as well as when to go in."

The VML, through its seven area opportunity centers, is in contact with most of the migrants, seasonal and ex-migrant workers in the Valley. The centers offer these workers job and health referral, vocational and other counseling and recreation facilities.

Conditions are rough for migrants with as many as 12 to 14 persons living together in inadequate, often unhealthy facilities.

Some of these seasonal farm workers have told VML staffers that promises of good houses, food and clothing persuaded them to come to

work in the valley. They report arriving to discover promises very often are forgotten. While migrants are worried about the conditions their families live in, most are unable to do much by themselves to remedy the situation. This is where VML enters the picture.

For VML staff workers, migrant problems are variations on a theme. Listen to the wife of a newly arrived migrant who confronted a VML'er on his recent visit to one of the many migrant camps.

"No han mantenido su palabra," she shouted excitedly. Translated, the gist of her conversation was—

"They came to Texas to get us," she reported. "They said in Oregon there would be a nice house to live in; we would be given some food and clothing. They have not kept their promises."

"The man who owns us, he drove the bus. He didn't sit with us. Like with a big truck he rode in his own cabin."

"We didn't have any blankets and it was cold. We rode for four days and four nights. We slept on the floor. Now they have us here. We can't leave because they have the bus."

Some growers do care and they support VML activity. Consider Hubert Wilson, a grower near Dayton, Oregon, who is building 20 new summer shelters, modern "A" frame houses that will house approximately 120 persons.

How do migrants feel about the VML? A young migrant worker, 18, married, who because of his life of hardship looks much older than he is, explained: "Without the League we were nobody going nowhere. Now we can make what we want of our lives. Not everybody makes use of the VML's services but at least they're being given that chance."

This youth was the third generation of his family to make the annual migration from Texas and had never received any formal education. He is now enrolled in one of the VML's basic education classes and will soon take high school equivalency examinations.

For many migrants language poses a major problem. Unable to read or write English, they face daily situations that the language barrier prevents them from solving effectively. The VML helps these workers adjust through bi-lingual staff members who can help Spanish- or Russian-speaking migrants communicate their needs more readily.

Classes have begun at Salem Technical Vocational Community College to train migrants as welders. These men have shown they want to change their lives. They are enthusiastic. Welding students arrive at their classroom early in the morning, take a short lunch break and stay well after the class is officially over.

Graduates of these welding classes are guaranteed jobs at nearly three times the salary they made in the fields.

Another aspect of VML's community action operation is *The Opportunity News,* a newspaper published in Spanish, Russian and English, providing migrants with information on job opportunities, program opportunities, sanitation projects, social security benefits and health services. Through such news stories and pictures, migrants are beginning to feel they are a part of the community they live in and are kept up-to-date on projects of the VML.

For migrant children, school is a real problem. Not only language, but cultural and religious differences pose difficulties for some of them.

VML has established 10 migrant summer schools, which will provide intensive classroom work for one thousand 5 to 13-year-old migrant and seasonal farm worker children.

Many of these youngsters change homes several times a year, thus, VML feels intensive crash schooling will help them keep up with their classes during the regular school year.

In conjunction with the summer school program, 10 migrant day care centers have also been established so the workers' wives may also work in the fields without the worry of leaving the children sitting all day in the car or alone at home. This helps bring up family income and offers children supervised learning and recreation.

Along with Spanish-American, Negro and Southwestern white migrants, some one hundred or more Russian families have settled in the Willamette Valley working in the fields or in nearby Portland as factory workers or mechanics.

Many came to Oregon from Brazil, where they struggled for years to make a living as farmers and before that from China and Manchuria, and even earlier—30 or 40 years ago—the older ones lived in Russia. Others have found their way to the Willamette Valley via Turkey or Iran.

Russians working in Oregon have their problems as do the Spanish or other native-born migrants. They struggle to hold to the customs of old Russia, while trying to understand the ways of modern America. Traditions clash. For example, Russians do not understand when health officials insist husbands take their wives to hospitals for childbirth when their religion clearly says no male may be present during the birth of a child.

The VML takes all these conflicting and contradictory life styles into its day-to-day operation without pause.

VISTA Volunteers assigned to each of the seven Opportunity Centers work long hard hours maintaining personal contact with the people in the migrant camps in their area. Each Opportunity Center has organized athletic teams and is participating in inter-center league play in baseball and basketball.

Alan Fujii, a VISTA working for the Independence Opportunity Center, typically, is constantly on the alert for new ways of working with the people in his area and tries to keep himself informed of current camp activities. On occasion, when the workers are not working, Alan will visit his camps, round up teams of men and stage a tug-of-war contest, trying to keep them happy by giving them something to do.

Sergio Ruiz, the first Job Corps graduate to sign up for VISTA, is working at West Stayton Opportunity Center, as is Volunteer Debbie Albright, who spends time each day as a teacher's aide at West Stayton Elementary School. In addition to this Debbie spends certain evenings each week reading to children at the migrant camps.

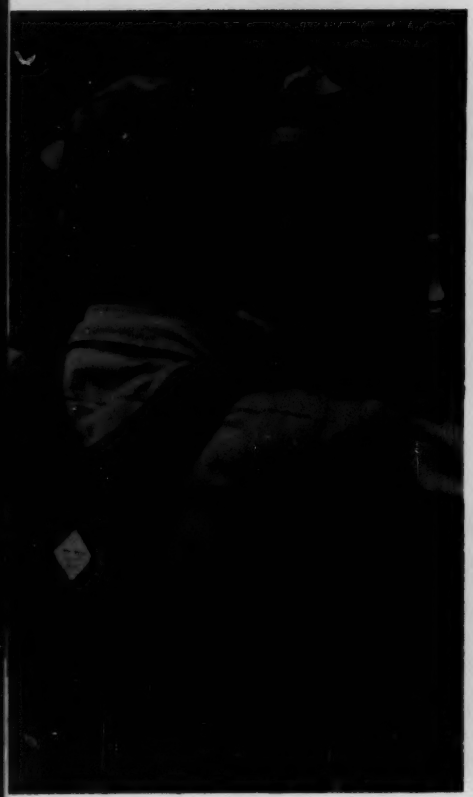
Native Oregonians and concerned young people like the VISTA's are much of the reason why migrant farm workers in Willamette Valley have hope for a better life. With increasing Federal and State assistance allotted to improving working conditions for this important labor force, migrants can end their poverty cycle.

—ROBERT MORRIS

The Millstone Sewing Center

One of the smallest Community Action agencies in Appalachia is the Millstone Community Action Council, Inc., of Eastern Kentucky. Representing a total population of 1,683, which has a rate of poverty of 72 per cent, the Millstone Council takes in four old mining communities: the hollows of Millstone, Kona, Thornton, and Sargent.

The story of these four hollows, which wind their way into the ragged mountains and from which the head waters of the Kentucky River flow, is familiar to the Eastern Kentucky soft coal region. Automation has killed the once roaring coal camps that poured thousands of paychecks into the rural economy. The young adults have gone. The



four communities are now dying, as the old, the infirm, and the very young make up inordinate proportions of their populations.

But sometime in the summer of 1965, a Millstone housewife in her fifties found out about the national Community Action Program and its possibilities. Her county (Letcher County, Kentucky) had been funded for program development and the small staff, headquartered in the county seat, helped organize a Millstone neighborhood advisory group. It was this group that selected the housewife, Mrs. Mabel Kiser, as its chairwoman. Only the year before, Mrs. Kiser had finally completed a correspondence course that gave her the equivalent of a high school diploma. Her other attainments were that she was a part-time worker for the Salvation Army and she wrote a local news and gossip column for the "Mountain Eagle," one of the weekly newspapers in Letcher County.

Mrs. Kiser's husband, Blaine, is one of the few men in the area still working in the mines. However, he has spent the last few months on strike. The Kisers have lived in the Upper Kentucky River region all their lives. Their familiarity with all the residents of the area represented by the Millstone Council explains in part, the striking success of Mabel Kiser as an organizer.

"I couldn't bear to think of all that money being available to Letcher County and none of it coming to Millstone," Mrs. Kiser says of her decision to give long hours and many days to organizing a strong community action group.

Driving a black Volkswagen that matches her taste for black clothes and her sparrow-like intensity—she is a little woman, five feet, one inch, at most—Mrs. Kiser visited every family in the four hollows. Often this meant trudging winding paths up steep mountainsides, or driving up roads that would try a jeep in her little car. But for someone "born to these hills," as she puts it, organizing the people was a challenge well met. After all, the Kisers themselves live at the end of a creek branch in Millstone that is so narrow that along some stretches the road is nothing more than the creek bed.

Headquarters for the Millstone group became an abandoned four-room school building. Community dinners became a regular event in order to raise funds to pay for heat and utilities. Jobless fathers, assigned to the county's Employment Security office, were reassigned to the Millstone group to help renovate the old school building. With an air of high optimism and the aid of a county highway crew, the men literally blasted a road out of the rocky slope so that cars could get to the school. A community library made up of donated books was set up. In spite of the rugged terrain and distances involved, the monthly Community Action group meetings averaged over 50 people, almost all of them poor.

With virtually no professional assistance, the Millstone group conceived and even developed a tentative proposal calling for a Federal grant. Part of the idea was Mabel Kiser's. Why not, she reasoned, take the thousands of useless garments that come into Letcher County every year from the Salvation Army and renovate them for the children of needy families? She was well acquainted with the Salvation Army clothes, since she worked one day a week sorting them.

Many of the women in the Millstone area desperately needed work, especially the widows who, because of the way public assistance is

structured in Kentucky, receive no welfare benefits at all. And, the children of the poor needed good clothes. Too often, Mrs. Kiser had seen a local child refuse to attend school because the tattered clothing the child had to wear made it feel ashamed.

The Millstone Sewing Center Proposal (now a formal request before the OEO), was in this state when the Letcher County Opportunity Committee and the Millstone Council asked the Council of the Southern Mountains, Inc. (CSM) for technical assistance. The request came in the early winter of 1965 as many of the poor of Millstone began to grow restless. They were wondering if the hope that seemed so bright in the summer was really worth believing in.

The representative from the CSM was so impressed by Mrs. Kiser's organization and its knack for defining and working out local problems that he recommended that the Millstone Community Action Council become a delegate agency of the Letcher County Economic Opportunity Committee. With the help of Whitesburg attorney and author, Harry M. Caudill, Mabel Kiser filed the necessary articles of incorporation. An "Inc." was soon added after the Millstone Council's full name. And in January, the Letcher County CAP recognized Millstone as a delegate agency and also agreed to apply on Millstone's behalf for the nearly $45,000 needed to set up the sewing center.

The federal funds asked for are to provide salaries for twelve part-time seamstresses, a full-time shop foreman, and a supervisor. Only the supervisor may be recruited from outside of Millstone. The rest of the jobs are for Millstone people only. Strict requirements as far as establishing financial need will be placed on all the seamstress jobs. The funds will also provide sewing equipment and a vehicle to make deliveries to the poor throughout Letcher County, no matter how far out of the way they live.

In designing their program, the people of Millstone tried to anticipate the problems that many of the poorest of the poor have in relating to programs of any sort in the mountains. The isolated mountain shack may provide its inhabitants with a privacy they value dearly. But the price of this seclusion comes high when services are needed. Often it is a question of bringing programs to the people for whom the programs are meant, if these people are to benefit from the programs at all.

Mabel Kiser has said, "I often think these big programs are too much for us country people. We can't afford them. We can't learn how to deal with these programs as fast as we're expected. We can't even cope with the new houses they talk about building out here because we can't afford to maintain them. Some of the programs I am hearing about are the same way. They expect far more than we're able to give."

The Millstone Sewing Center is a modest proposal conceived by modest people, who wanted—and want—something within their abilities to administer. They see it as a building block. Maybe it will develop a labor pool that could attract an industry. Maybe it will simply provide needed income and needed skills to make the houses in the Millstone Council area more livable. It will certainly lead to better clothed and happier school children throughout Letcher County.

But who can tell what a building block of some hope will lead to? It is far easier to predict that despair will persist and then grow in the thousands of "Millstones" that dot Appalachia should such building blocks be cast away. Mabel Kiser, herself, sometimes disturbed by doubt, fearing the sewing center might not be approved, knows this. Yet, she was moved to bestir her little community into action, for it looked like Millstone might be lost entirely.

—EDWIN J. SAFFORD

OEO INDIAN PROGRAMS

new hope for old emma

Two CAP workers, both Indians, were heading by car into a remote isolated area of their native South Dakota reservation, their destination the home of Old Emma Bear Woman.

"I've been here twice to see her," said the community worker to his companion. "She sure needs help."

They pulled into the barren yard of Old Emma's yard and were now walking toward her one-room, weather-worn house.

The man who had been driving suddenly shouted, "Look!" Before them was the prone form of Old Emma. She lay in the shadows of her house.

It was soon evident that Old Emma had collapsed from weakness. She slowly opened her haunted, deep-set eyes and feebly attempted to express her thanks for their help.

They carefully placed her in the car, making her as comfortable as possible and started for the nearest hospital some 60 miles away. The unspoken fear that they wouldn't make it rode with them.

They arrived at the U. S. Public Health Service hospital in time. The admitting physician told them that his examination revealed Old Emma was suffering from malnutrition and exposure to the extreme heat, but in a week or two she would be in fair condition.

When the two men reported this incident later that day to the reservation CAP committee chairman,

they were told that Old Emma had sold some land quite awhile ago and probably had money in "safe-keeping" with a local Federal agency.

The community worker checked this out and found it true! She had over $9,000 being held for her "later use." Following a heated conversation with an official, the worker went to the recently employed Legal Services lawyer who went directly to the government official. After threatening legal action, he was able to work out a monthly cash allotment so Old Emma would not be hungry again during her few remaining years.

The CAP Director notified a health aide that upon Emma's return home she would need a watchful eye and extra assistance for transportation and shopping.

Men employed on the Reservation's Nelson Amendment project donated their services to fix the doors and windows to make Old Emma's house livable until the Tribal Council could find room for Old Emma in the tribally-operated housing-for-the-aged near the hospital.

Old Emma is nearly 90, but the fact that somebody cares about her now is reflected in her younger-looking eyes and appearance. She is one of thousands who has suddenly discovered somebody cares. From the beginning of the War on Poverty the Office of Economic Opportunity recognized the special needs of America's first citizens living on over 200 Federal Indian reservations, colonies, rancherias and other types of reserved trust-status land. OEO was also aware of the unique legal-historical relationship of the reservation residents to the government, the extreme depth of poverty on reservations and broad cultural differences.

The Office of Economic Opportunity made special arrangements to implement effective Community Action Programs on the reservations.

Several significant steps were taken to help the American Indian help himself.

1. The Indian Division, in the Office of Special Field Programs under Community Action, was established to provide the Indian people with direct access to OEO.
2. The Indian Division arranged grants to three universities, with long-standing records of interest and service to Indians, to provide Technical Assistance and Training when requested, to those reservations wishing to start Community Action Programs.
3. The Indian Division analysts and three University Technical Assistance teams traveled to nearly every reservation explaining the Economic Opportunity Act and advising on the technical aspects of program development.
4. The Indian Division adopted the philosophic position that its analysts are just as much the representatives of the applicant tribes as of the U. S. Government.

The response has been an eye-opener. Many who have held fast to the idea that we should do for the American Indian what *we* think he needs have suddenly awakened.

One hundred reservations are participating in Community Action Programs, 96 are already through the program development grant stage and are now operating programs with several components. All of the reservation CAP's serve all people within their reservation boundaries.

In addition to the regular Community Action programs initiated by tribal groups, there are numerous other OEO programs of which In-

dians are beneficiaries or participants or both.

Among these are Legal Services Programs, on four reservations serving 125,000 residents, and Operation Medicare Alert, carried out by 13 reservation CAA's with many of the older citizens being employed to inform the other older citizens of the new Federal Medicare program.

Also, Upward Bound programs in 18 institutions of higher learning have enrolled over 500 Indian youths from 13 states in programs aimed at improving their chances of success when they attend college later.

VISTA—Volunteers In Service to America—has placed over 300 volunteers on 56 reservation projects at the request of these tribes. A number of Indian youths have in turn volunteered for services with VISTA.

Small Business Development Centers have been established on two reservations to provide technical assistance and training for those interested in developing or expanding a small business enterprise. Others are assisted in getting financial assistance from other sources, such as commercial banks, FHA or local credit unions.

Credit unions are becoming more commonplace as many reservation residents are recognizing the need for locally-controlled credit resources.

Many of the reservation CAA's are now engaging in multi-purpose programs such as homemaker services, home construction and maintenance skills training, health and sanitation assistance programs, parent-child development centers and a host of other programs based on the local community needs.

The vanishing American Indian of history is certainly vanishing. From a people who were over-run and defeated in the last century, they are re-emerging in greater numbers (with a birth rate twice the national average); they are no longer waiting for handouts (many tribes are employing skilled business managers under their own direction) and nearly every tribe is putting greater emphasis on education.

It has been estimated that in 1492 there were nearly a million Indians in North America. Sixty years ago there were only 240,000, but the 1960 census shows the number had climbed to 524,000 with a continuing birth rate of 42.1 per thousand. With the impetus of mounting programs of government aid, community action and self-help there is every sign that the next generation of Indians will have broken through the poverty barrier.

—JAMES J. WILSON

Waging the War

FROM REFORM SCHOOL to Shriver Scholarship winner is the saga of young Robert Jones, of St. Louis, Mo. Named an outstanding anti-poverty worker, Jones is elated about his new horizons but still mindful of his painful past experiences.

"My impression is they don't really care what you do when you get out," said Robert of reform school officials who turned him out into the world after a three-year imprisonment, begun at age 17, without a clue as to how he was to begin supporting himself. He had not been taught any job skills, did not have a high school diploma and was offered no assistance in getting readjusted or finding a job.

Now 22, Jones, from St. Louis' Pruitt-Igoe public housing area, is getting his first break in life. He is one of seven national winners of a a Sargent Shriver Scholarship, set up by the Experiment in International Living to honor poverty warriors who best exemplify the spirit of self-help and community action supported by the War on Poverty. The Experiment, a nonprofit group promoting international understanding, is financing a summer abroad for the Scholarship winners.

Jones left for a two-month visit to India on July 10, following a brief orientation at the Experiment's School for International Training at Brattleboro, Vermont. All of his travel and living costs will be paid by the Experiment, and he will receive $150 for expenses during the two-month trip.

Shriver Scholars are traveling with ten Experiment group members and a trained leader. They spent their first month living with a native family, and work with Peace Corps teams the following three weeks. The final week they will rejoin the Experiment team in a major city of the country to which they have been assigned to compare and evaluate their experiences.

Jones was nominated for the scholarship by the St. Louis Human Development Corporation for his volunteer work with teenage boys at the Pruitt-Igoe Neighborhood Station. He began hanging around the neighborhood center because he couldn't get a job. They called him "a model for other young men who might feel society rejects them because of a background such as his."

The irony of Robert Jones' background is that he somehow came out of it trying to help—rather than hurt—society. For he never had any of the breaks he is now trying to give other young men to prevent them from "going wrong."

Deserted by his father, he was brought up by his mother who supported Robert and three other children on Aid to Dependent Children. At 17, Robert was arrested with six other boys, including three older men, for armed robbery.

He was convicted and sent to Algoa Intermediate Reformatory at Jefferson City, Missouri. At Algoa he did farm work, and later at another reform school in Moberly, Mo., he mostly worked as a dishwasher. He was not taught any skills at either school, but was allowed to take high school courses for credit.

After his release, Jones applied on his own to the St. Louis Board of Education for permission to take the high school equivalency examination. Robert passed the exam, which cost $3.00, and received his high school diploma in December 1964.

He then went to a St. Louis trade school to learn installation and maintenance of air-conditioning and heating systems. But despite a certificate certifying he had specific skills, no one would give him a job. They said he needed experience and how could he get any?

In addition to being fresh out of school, Robert had two other socio-economic strikes against him: he was colored and he had a police record.

"It's kind of funny," says Robert, "coming out of reform school and not being able to do all the things you dreamed about while you were there—like getting a job and helping your mother."

Instead of turning against society, he became sympathetic to the problems of boys like himself and felt a personal responsibility to help them. He began to spot the boys in his community who were "going wrong." From talks with the staff at Pruitt-Igoe Neighborhood Station, Robert

gained some self-confidence.

One thing he had learned in reform school was the value of recreation, so he started organizing baseball and basketball teams. He tried to talk to the tough ones, telling them of the unhappy consequences of crime, and advising them of the alternatives offered by the poverty program—the Job Corps to learn work skills or the Neighborhood Youth Corps for high school dropouts who want to finish school.

Jones only recently started receiving any pay for his efforts. The Neighborhood Station and the YMCA each pay him as a part-time employee, a total of $91.00 every two weeks. This along with an allotment from his older brother serving in Vietnam with the Army is the family's sole income. But he works considerably more than an eight-hour day. "You know how it is," says Jones, "you get involved and stay on."

Robert is concerned that he has not had "any real formal education" to qualify him for counseling others. "Social workers have education to back them up and books they can refer to to help them in figuring out personalities," he noted. He would like to go to school but there is that money problem again.

His intuitive understanding of the human beings he knows best, those who have suffered from broken homes, poverty and all its by-products, may be more than formal schooling could give him.

He thinks many forces can work to "pull out a guy who is mixed up and turn him around. It could be his mother, his teacher, someone he listens to or even a girl he cares about who will quit him unless he gets a job."

He explains the resentment of Negro men who are constantly refused jobs and then see whites canvassing their neighborhoods for business. "That's what makes them mad," said Jones.

He understands all too well what happens to the boy who leaves prison and has no where to go for help. Robert recalls, "You are real sensitive about how people feel about you, and when you keep getting turned down for jobs, you feel like everybody's against you." Although Robert does not think he was badly treated, he says many boys leave reform school with "revenge in their hearts because of the way they were treated."

Jones thinks people should be aware of these sensitivities to help change attitudes before it is too late. "The breaks a boy gets when he first gets out may be what will influence his future for good or bad."

Robert wants to continue working with people in the anti-poverty program when he returns from India in the fall, and maybe this break and the experiences it will provide will make up for the formal education he has missed.

—NORMA GORDON

PAUL REVERE AND THE RAIDERS, a nationally-known group of five rock and roll musicians, have been taking time from their schedule of nightly entertainment obligations to put on daytime shows for Job Corpsmen whenever feasible. The concerts, the expenses of which are paid by the group, have proven themselves as great morale boosters for the Corpsmen. The Raiders recently visited the Corpsmen at Camp Mingo in Missouri and at Eight Canyon Center in New Mexico.

MORE THAN 160 LEGAL SERVICE PROGRAMS were established before the close of Fiscal Year 1966 at a cost in Federal funds of $27 million. There are programs in 43 states, including Alaska and Hawaii, with all projects except those proposed for North Dakota being approved by the respective state governors.

Thirty-seven of the fifty major American cities now have Legal Services projects and ten more have applications pending with OEO. The remaining cities are considering applying for projects.

The major bar associations in the United States are actively supporting the program, including the American Bar Association, the American Trial Lawyers Association, the National Bar Association and the National Legal Aid and Defenders Association.

THE INTEREST OF BUSINESSMEN in employing trained young Job Corpsmen was demonstrated recently at OEO headquarters. Two Corpsmen, as members of the Capital Project, were working in the OEO data processing center where they received in-service training. As the result of their training, the two young men were just employed by the Telecomputing Services, Inc., which has a contract at the Goddard Space Flight Center.

Both Edward Kanoho Chock and Romeo Beland, Job Corpsmen for 14 months, signed contracts for three years at a guaranteed minimum annual salary of $6000. Chock and Beland both have backgrounds of low-income jobs and records of strong leadership qualities. They devoted their free evening hours to learning the fundamentals of data processing and then were assigned last January to work in the center six hours a day—Capital Corpsmen spend six hours working and two in educational classes each day—gaining the experience which led to their employment by a private employer.

IN WATTS a child gets his first look at the Pacific. In San Antonio a child receives, for the first time in his life, fresh fruit and milk daily. In Baltimore a youngster sees his first baseball game and in Harlem a child decides he wants to grow up to be like the man who is teaching him how to play first base.

Experiences like these are being repeated this summer throughout the slums of the ten major American cities where Operation CHAMP is in operation. CHAMP, a summer recreation and physical fitness program, is sponsored jointly by the President's Council on Physical Fitness, OEO and the Neighborhood Youth Corps of the Department of Labor.

A 9-week program, CHAMP is filling in the gaps of local summer recreation programs, offering restless children and teenagers programs of handicrafts, storytelling, modern and folk dances, sports clinics and league games in baseball, basketball, football and swimming.

Each program is adapted to the local situation. In New York City for example there are eight "sports camps," with children being bussed to those camps located outside the target area. In Baltimore "recreational streets" are closed off temporarily in areas with little or no recreational facilities. "Instant recreation" is then provided when a van truck, complete with police escorts, hauls up recreational facilities. In San Antonio, a nutrition program includes not only fresh milk and fruit or vegetable but 20 minutes of daily instruction in good eating habits.

The ten target cities are Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, St. Louis, San Antonio and Washington.

CHAMP National Director is Jim Winthers, on loan from the San Juan Unified School District of Carmichael, California where he is director of physical education and recreation. Administrative assistant is Joseph Scudero, former Notre Dame backfield coach, on loan from OEO.

Winthers—who runs about 30 miles each week to keep in shape—emphasizes that CHAMP is more than just a recreation program, saying

"CHAMP is an attempt to make the better side of life visible to kids who see it only from a great distance. If we can improve their view, the rest will take care of itself."

TEN ALASKAN FISHERMEN, operating out of Bethel, Alaska, recently received a $36,000 cooperative loan from the Farmers Home Administration under its OEO-funded rural loan program. The fishermen are using the loan to install a large freezer where they will store their catch in order to avoid spoilage when the refrigerator ship which takes their fish to market is delayed. The freezer also enables the fishermen to hold their fish off the market, at least temporarily, when prices are unfavorable.

THE NEED FOR PEOPLE to serve as health aides to the professional staff in the health services professions prompted OEO to allocate close to one million dollars for demonstration projects to train poor people as health aides. There are twelve training projects in nine states — Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Tennessee. More than 800 men and women 45 years of age and older are being recruited and trained, especially as aides to provide home care for the elderly. The training is being done by nursing associations, public health departments and union health clinics. The aides will then be employed by agencies such as hospitals, health departments and nursing homes. OEO and the Public Health Services will evaluate the projects as to their effect on the community where they are located and as to how applicable they could be to other communities.

A "TEACHER" THAT NEVER GETS ANGRY, never plays favorites and never gets tired. That's the Edison Responsive Environment machine, known as ERE, but popularly called the "talking typewriter." OEO has finished negotiations to bring 20 ERE's in the classroom in an experimental project in New York City to teach reading and numerical skills to disadvantaged preschoolers and secondary students. The project will be operated by the New York Board of Education.

Initially, 300 culturally deprived youngsters, aged four to five, will use the "typewriter" that reads aloud, takes dictation and shows pictures. The child enters a soundproof booth where he is free to type any key he desires; then—with the basic ERE technique—he will hear the key named and see the letter projected on a small screen in front of him.

The ERE combinations of letter projection and sound vary to keep the student interested in the whole process, learning that letters make words and words make sentences. The "typewriters" will be used to teach low-income school dropouts and functionally illiterate adults.

A THREE-PRONGED PROGRAM to give 150 Appalachian high school students practical training in early childhood development, a taste of college life and on-the-spot experience in Head Start centers has been financed under grants from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, OEO and the Labor Department.

The program brought teenagers from low-income families from southeastern Ohio and West Virginia to Ohio University for five weeks of on-campus training. Here, the youngsters worked alongside 75 students already enrolled in the University, who acted as their sponsors.

At the conclusion of the training, both groups, high-school and college students, returned to 10 depressed areas in Appalachia, and are working as paid aides in Head Start classrooms. The teenagers work in centers near their homes, the college students living with them.

In the fall, and throughout the coming academic year, the high school teacher aides will work part-time, for one or two hours a day, in kindergartens, hospitals and other related locations, gaining increased experience while being paid for their work.

Early in the program at Ohio University, some of the teenagers were asked to stand up and tell something about themselves. One girl explained, "I can't really tell about my life, because I haven't had one. This Teenage-Teacher-Aide Program is my *only* chance to have a life in the future."

Next Month:

Getting the Message to the People:

A special issue on communications for community action.

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